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RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 7500
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 4546
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN 0452
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 4882
RUEHMU/AMEMBASSY MANAGUA 0517
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 6233
RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN 0545
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 000555

SIPDIS

USOAS FOR AMBASSADOR MORALES, WHA FOR A/S SHANNON, WHA/EPSC
FOR M ROONEY, WHITE HOUSE FOR AMBASSADOR DAVIDSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/08/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [KDEM](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [BL](#) [CU](#)

SUBJECT: MR. OBAMA, TEAR DOWN THIS EMBARGO: BOLIVIA'S BIG
SUMMIT PLANS

REF: A. LA PAZ 470
[1](#)B. STATE 34666

Classified By: A/EcoPol Chief Brian Quigley for reasons 1.4 (b,d.)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. In a press conference at the presidential palace April 8, Bolivian President Evo Morales announced that Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) will meet prior to the Summit of the Americas to discuss a Bolivian proposal to lift the United States' embargo on Cuba. The group, which consists of Venezuela, Bolivia, Cuba, Honduras, Nicaragua and Dominica, will meet in Caracas April 15, only two days before the Summit of the Americas (SOA) is set to take place in Trinidad and Tobago. Morales said the U.S. "doesn't have the moral authority to talk about human rights," as a country whose cooperation is "only oriented in conspiring against other governments and bringing violence." He hopes President Obama will "reflect" on a potential lifting of the embargo. Morales further hinted that there would be a "profound debate" on both Cuba and capitalism, suggesting that despite promises by the Foreign Minister (ref A), Morales and his leftist comrades will not "play nice" at the SOA. END SUMMARY.

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ALBA "TO THE RESCUE"
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[1](#)2. (U) At an ALBA summit to be held April 15-16 in Caracas, Morales says he will table a resolution calling on the United States to lift the embargo on Cuba. ALBA and its "People's Trade Agreement" were the creations of Venezuelan President Chavez, who wanted a "Bolivarian" alternative to capitalist-based U.S. Free Trade Agreements (FTA) in the region. Membership currently consists of Venezuela, Bolivia, Cuba, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Dominica, all who are slated

to attend the ALBA planning meeting. Ecuador and Paraguay may also attend as observers. Morales is confident that there will be a consensus reached at the Caracas meeting, but if not, he said he will bring the proposal to the SOA on his own volition.

OBVIOUSLY COMMUNISM WORKS, BUT...

¶3. (U) Morales, who repeatedly expresses his admiration for Cuba and Fidel Castro, criticized the United States for the 46 year embargo against the Caribbean nation. Morales claims that the embargo has caused grave economic damage to Cuba over its duration. "If I was Obama in this moment, I would compensate the damages to Cuba done by previous administrations," Morales said. He also emphasized that President Obama has "the whole world's support" in lifting the embargo; asserting that 185 countries "disapprove" of what Morales calls "a historic injustice" to the Cuban people.

HIGH ALTITUDE = MORAL HIGH GROUND?

¶4. (U) President Morales further advised President Obama that "in this millennium, there should be respect given to all the people of the world; it's not possible that some countries condemn others, particularly when they don't have the moral authority to speak about human rights." Morales also remains defensive about criticism regarding human rights violations

in Bolivia, coming from both U.S.-based watch-dog organizations and the Department's Human Rights Report. Further criticizing the USG, Morales said that he was going to demonstrate how U.S. cooperation is "only oriented in conspiring against other governments and bringing violence."

MORALES' "ALL-STAR SUMMIT TEAM"

¶5. (C) Vice Foreign Minister Hugo Fernandez told the Charge that President Morales, Foreign Minister Choquehuanca, Organization of American States (OAS) Ambassador Pinelo and Multilateral Affairs Director General Miriam Siles Cuespo could comprise the Bolivian delegation at the Summit. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed these names to Poloff April 9, adding that the Bolivian representative to the United Nations, Pablo Salon will also attend. The current delegation is to be 12 representatives.

COMMENT

¶6. (C) Morales is setting the stage for a potential showdown between ALBA countries and those that support "speculative capitalism" of the U.S. Despite promises of Summit cooperation from the Foreign Ministry on March 25, Bolivia is prepared to make the embargo issue a key focus of the Summit, likely putting President Obama and the U.S. delegation on the spot. Morales promises to preach the dangers of the "interfering imperialists," all the while ignoring the slough of economic and political problems in his own country. Post also suspects there is Venezuelan influence for Morales to take the lead in the embargo issue. END COMMENT.

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